caribou. Autumn finds them jigging again through the ice of the lakes."

"Lake trout and lake salmon are the principal fish that the natives secure. Nearly all the lakes with which the country is dotted abound in both these species, and they bite readily at a hook jigged through the ice at the end of a line, either unbaited or with a strip from the fish's own belly as a bait. Many are speared with a long trident (nuyak-pak), or a double gaff (kakivak), in the large pools that form on the edges of the lakes while the main portions are still covered with ice. Hundreds of salmon trout are caught in spring migrating up the rivers to the lakes, while a few sculpins are speared through the ice in the autumn at the mouths of certain creeks. Many tom-cod are caught with long copper hooks through cracks in the sea ice during the spring and fall, especially near Cape Krusenstern and around the islands in Bathurst inlet. Long ago, a native told me, the little bullheads about an inch long that are so common in the lakes and streams were quite an important item of food; now the natives seldom trouble about them, [sic] In Noahognik, where caribou are comparatively scarce but fish plentiful, the Eskimos resort to the lakes as soon as sealing is abandoned, and jig for lake trout through holes in the ice; then when the rivers and creeks break out in the late spring they go down to their mouths or to their exits from the lakes and trap the migrating salmon in stone weirs, both the large fish ascending to the lakes to spawn and the young [104] fry, two seasons old, that are making their way down to the sea. The migration ends when summer begins, and the Eskimos then wander over the land in search of

1: Jenness--152-157 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 226

"Primitive as are the methods of fishing that the Copper Eskimos employ they are nevertheless in most cases very effective. The fish-net, so universal among the Eskimos of the Mackenzie river and of northern Alaska, is here unknown, or was until the last few years. Often the Copper Eskimos practise the most primitive of all methods, catching the fish with their hands as they lurk beneath boulders on the edges of lakes or streams. It is but one stage in advance of this when they rock the boulders with their feet, and stab with improvised spears at the fish as they dart out from underneath. But their commonest method of fishing is with hook and line through holes or cracks in the ice with which the lakes are covered during the greater part of the year.

The hook, karyok, was originally made of copper, but iron, beaten into the same shape, now frequently takes its place. Of whichever metal it is made, however, the hook is always barbless; even if given an ordinary European hook the natives will immediately file away the barb. This may be due in part to mere conservatism, but mainly to the fact that lake trout and lake salmon, [153] which are the principal fish the natives catch, seem rather to nibble round the bait than actually to swallow it. At any rate, on the two or three occasions that I have set lines over-night most of the bait was nibbled away, but no fish was caught on a hook. Trout and salmon must be jagged in the lip as they come to nibble, and hauled up rapidly before they have time to escape. The barb is thus a disadvantage, for often it merely tears the lip and lets the fish drop off;

moreover it is more difficult to disengage a barbed hook, especially in cold weather.

Having no eye, the hook is riveted to an oval piece of bone or horn, tivyak or karyoksak, which acts also as a sinker. The line, ukkwak, is attached through a hole, or two holes, drilled at the upper end of this sinker. Most lines are made of plaited sinew taken from the leg-bone of the caribou, but sometimes, especially in Dolphin and Union strait, one comes upon a line made wholly or partly of baleen; I was told that these baleen lines are used chiefly for tom-cod, but did not discover the reason. The Eskimo's fishing-rod, aulezzuk, is usually a short piece of wood with a deep notch at one end, forming as it were two thumbs, kuvlokuk; the other end is spliced to a curved horn handle which also has a deep notch close to the end, the two notches being used to wind up the line. The rods vary in length from eighteen inches to two feet or more. Often one or two small bone pins, naigliglarvik, are inserted along the stick to enable the line to be shortened a little while fishing. For bait, mikkigak, the native generally uses a strip of skin and flesh from the belly of the fish, though sometimes he uses the oesophagus. Some fishermen take pains to conceal the hook, but others are quite careless in that respect; it really appears to make very little difference, as the fish will nibble in either case, and often indeed the natives use no bait at all. The fisherman's outfit further comprises a copper or iron chisel, turk, mounted on a long stout wooden

pole, (1) a small wooden scoop, ilaun, with a bone 'free-board' to protect the edges, (2) a seal-skin water-bucket, kattak, and a seal-skin bag or haversack to hold the fish, ungellak. In the later days of spring, and also in the fall, the man usually carries also a trident, nuyakpak, or a double-gaff, kakivak.

The lakes freeze in winter to a depth of from five to six feet. As many of them are shallow and freeze right to the bottom, while others, though deep in most places, have shallow bays, the fisherman needs some guide to show him where to dig his holes. So wherever an Eskimo has found successful fishing he sets up two stones about a dozen yards apart on a ridge overlooking the spot, lining them up so that they point exactly to his fishing-ground. Every lake of any considerable size has landmarks of this kind,

---

"1. The natives prefer copper as a rule, because in shallow lakes or streams the chisel often strikes a stone on the bottom. An iron blade will chip and is difficult to sharpen again, whereas a blade of copper merely burrs. For the same reason copper knives are still used occasionally for building snow huts on land."

"2. Sometimes the broad base of an antler is used in place of a scoop."

which are given the same name, nakkatain, as the stones set up by the hunter to mark the direction of a cache. A native who is unfamiliar with the region always searches out these fishing-guides, follows their direction out on the ice for a hundred yards or so and digs his hole.

It takes a man nearly half an hour to make a hole of from 12" to 18" diameter at the top and from 4" to 6" diameter at the bottom. The chips of ice are baled out with the scoop, which, in the early days of spring, must be lashed to a long pole in order to reach to the bottom of the hole; later in the season the hole automatically fills with water from the melting surface of the lake, or the fisherman can pour water into it, so that the fragments of ice will float to the surface. The line is lowered until it touches the bottom of the lake, then raised two or three inches and kept constantly jigging. If the lake is very deep the line, unless it is exceptionally long, is lowered to its full extent, then, the moment a bite is felt, it is given a jerk, and, if the hook catches, pulled up [154] as quickly as possible so that the fish has no time to wriggle itself free. The Eskimo uses the back of his hands, or the wrists, in pulling up the line, hand over hand, instead of grasping it each time in the fingers; it is really a much quicker method. If the line is very long, however, it may become tangled in its own folds, or the fish may drop off before it reaches the surface; the native therefore runs back with his rod from the hole, and gradually slows down to a walk as the fish approaches the under-surface of the ice.

A hole is usually exhausted in about an hour, for the fish become cautious and keep away from the hook. The fisherman has therefore to dig four or five holes, as a rule, in the course of the day. A small lake yields almost nothing on the second day. Lake trout must find plenty of food during the winter, for many of them are very fat in the spring even before the ice round the edges of the lakes has begun to melt. They seem to stay near the bottom at this period. Lake salmon lie more dormant, and are smaller than those that have access to the sea. We caught none at all in the Colville hills until water had formed round the edges of the lakes. Both trout and salmon appear to love the sunlit pools into which the streams from the hills pour their waters. In one such pool a woman caught twenty-nine trout and two salmon in the space of four hours, while three of us who had dug holes not a hundred yards away could hardly raise a bite. The next day, however, only four fish were caught in the same pool.

When a fish bites, but is not hooked, the native cries keuk keuk, 'Come again' or keuk allaralumik kannakoktumik, 'Come again, another one; there are plenty down there.' After the fish is drawn up, it is killed with a sharp rap on the back of the head from the fishing-rod, and laid with its mouth towards the hole. The natives could give me no reason for this, but merely said that 'it had always been their custom' (pitkuherigaptigut uvagut) to point the fish towards its hole; there seemed to be an idea, however, that

other fish would [155] approach the hole to keep it company. After one has been caught, the fisherman will often say, as he lowers his line again, taki, taki, taki aiperlugo, 'Come, come, come, give me another;' but expressions of this kind have no magical significance. Sometimes an exceptionally large trout is caught on the hook, too big to be drawn up through the hole. The fisherman then holds it firmly against the under surface of the ice to keep it from dropping off, while a comrade runs up, lowers his own line, and jigs his hook also into the fish. The two men then steer it carefully through the narrow opening, or one holds the fish while the other enlarges the hole with the chisel.

A crack in the ice materially lessens the labour of digging a hole. In the later days of spring the surface of the lake becomes perforated with holes, and an ice-chisel is no longer needed. As the cracks widen and pools of water form round the edges the men make more and more use of their spears. They jig their hooks a foot or two below the surface, and impale the fish on their tridents as they approach the bait. I have already described in the previous chapter how they wade about in the water at this season and spear the fish at the corners of the lakes. In summer, when the lakes are free from ice, they sometimes employ another curious method, should any fish be seen close in to shore. The Eskimo will cast his line as far out as it will reach, and slowly draw it in again (ekkasaktok is the name given to the process); sometimes, but not often, the

fish will bite as the line is being drawn in.

Now and again a simple form of gorge is employed in the lakes. One woman slit a piece of bone about six inches long from the tibia of a caribou. She whittled one end to a sharp point and drilled a hole in the other to attach her line. This gorge she concealed inside the body of a small trout, and set it over night in a lake. In the morning she drew in a fine trout weighing about ten pounds -- the lake trout apparently devours the young of its own species. Another woman removed the spine from a small salmon trout and inserted in its place a number of short sharp-pointed bones. She then tied the fish together again, fastened a line to its tail, and set it overnight through a hole in the ice of a lake. I was away hunting the next day, and omitted to enquire whether she caught anything or not.

Trolling proper can be done only from a kayak. The fisherman holds his rod in his mouth with the line trailing behind him in the water. He paddles round and round until a fish is hooked, then makes for the shore as fast as he can, since he dare not draw in his line at once for fear his kayak will capsize. As soon as the boat touches the beach he jumps out, hauls in the fish and knocks it on the head with his fishing-rod. This method, as far as I know, is seldom practised outside of the region around Bathurst inlet, where kayaks are much in vogue for summer caribou hunting.

The salmon trout that come up from the sea are sometimes speared in the autumn as

they pursue each other round the boulders on the margins of the lakes. This is their mating season, and their colour changes to a bright red. The natives are well aware of both these facts, and further that the salmon at this time will never bite at the hook. The few that Ikpakhuak caught in the fall of 1915 were all speared with the double gaff. Large numbers are speared in the spring as they migrate up the streams and rivers. The use of a rake for this purpose has already been described. The Eskimos construct stone dams, isikat, across some shallow reach, either near the mouth of the creek or at its exit from the lake. (1) Usually there are four dams at intervals of twenty-five yards or so from each other. The lower three have narrow gaps through which the fish can pass, but the upper one is complete and blocks their passage altogether. As soon as the shoal has all entered through the third dam the natives rush in with their spears and slaughter them, throwing them out on to the bank or stringing them on long seal-skin lines. Sometimes they take the pre- [156] caution to close the entrance to the first dam with a boulder, sometimes one man merely stands guard over it and spears any fish that try to escape. In some weirs small blind caverns of stone are made in the dam

"1. Cf. Boas, Bulletin. A.M.N.H., Vol. XV, p.475."

where the fish can hide when frightened by the splashing and shouting of the natives. There the women catch them with their hands and string them on thongs of sealskin, using a rough bone needle about four inches long to pierce their bodies. It is very seldom indeed that a fish escapes when once it has entered a properly constructed weir. So simple and efficient a method of fishing naturally means a very pleasant and lazy existence for the natives as long as the migration lasts. They lie about in their tents all day waiting for the fish to appear. From time to time some one goes down to examine the weir, and gives a shout if any salmon have made their appearance, when everyone rushes out, clothed or unclothed, grasps a spear and races into the water.

At Nulahugyuk creek near Bernard harbour the natives had two series of weirs, one for the larger salmon migrating upstream, and one for young fry, two seasons old, migrating down to the sea. The latter are only about 8 inches long and weigh perhaps a third of a pound, whereas the adult salmon averages two feet in length and eight pounds in weight. Sometimes, as in June, 1916, the two are running at the same time; more often perhaps the young fish make their appearance two or three weeks later. Mr. G.H. Wilkins, who took a number of moving pictures at this place in 1915, describes the scene as follows: --

'The men and sometimes the women would run into the water with their spears and

jab and poke at the fish as they swam around. Some of the women would run to the walls of the weir and catch the fish as they stuck in between the stones in their attempts to get away. By this method the fish would soon get thinned out and there would be great competition for the remaining few. Eight or ten people would sometimes be spearing for the same fish with the result that some one or other's toe would suffer. I never saw any arguments as the result of this, but the injured one would retire from the fray for a moment or so to rub his toe. Soon the possibility of getting the fish would induce him to try for it between the other people's legs, with the frequent result that another would be delayed for a minute or so to rub his toe or shin. All the knocks were taken good-naturedly and they would discuss their injuries after the fray without any sign of ill feeling. When a fish was caught either by the men or women, they would run it through with a bone needle threaded on a string with a cross piece at the end, and drag the fish about with them in their endeavours to secure another one. Sometimes when the pond was almost cleaned out they would stop to kill the fish by knocking it on the head with a stone picked up rom [sic] the river bed before threading it on the line.

...'Their fishing was not restricted to the spearing of the big fish that were making their way up the river to spawn, but they also caught hundreds of the small fish as they came from the lake to the sea. Indeed it is surprising that the supply of fish in the lake keeps up so well, for it would seem as if the weirs that they build would entirely block

the fish from getting up stream and the small ones would entirely block the young ones from getting from the lake. It is certain that few escape that once get into the trap, but I have noticed numbers of the small ones hesitating to go through the narrow entrance to the trap. The Eskimos had noticed this, and before they went to clear the trap of the small fry, several of them would go some distance up stream and splashing through the water and waving their arms would "shoo" the fish down stream. This ruse was fairly successful, and at times the trap would be a seething mass of young salmon trout about six inches long. The disposal of these would be mostly left to the women and the children, although sometimes a man or two would join in with the rest.

'If there were more of these fish than the fishermen could conveniently eat as they caught them, they were strung on a line in a similar manner to the [157] larger fish, but as a rule the majority of these young fry were eaten alive, as one might say. A man, woman or child as the case might be, would catch a fish in the rocks, and would pop it into his mouth head first and chew up the head; the body quickly followed, convulsively protesting with its tail until that disappeared from sight and was crushed between the teeth. In most cases nothing more was seen of the fish, but if there were a few people there, and the haul was likely to be large, then some of the people would take the trouble to spit out the skin or else bite the head of the fish and then strip the skin off by catching hold of it with the teeth and sleeving the fish, eating the body after-

wards and throwing the skin away.'

Just as fish caught in the lakes must be laid with their heads towards the hole, so salmon that are killed going up-stream must be placed facing the lakes, and those going down-stream facing the sea. If they are split in two and hung up to dry the dorsal fins must face the lakes, or the sea, as the case may be; other salmon will then follow in their wake as though the previous shoals had continued their journey unmolested. The same regulation applies to the fish-spears; their points must face upstream or down-stream according to the direction in which the fish are running. Bows and arrows (and guns) must not be used within a hundred yards or so of the stream lest the fish should be frightened and cease to migrate; and when the salmon are running up-stream no iron utensil or weapon must be dipped into the water lest the fish should object to its taint. (1)

"1. Back (p. 381 et seq.) says that the Eskimos of Backs river caught white fish and small trout in an eddy below a waterfall and kept them alive in specially constructed ponds. Probably they had weirs like the Copper Eskimos into which the fish entered of their own accord and were then unable to escape."

1; Jenness--152-157 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo-13
116, 226

Tom-cod are caught through the sea-ice in the same manner as lake fish except that a much larger hook is used and lures of bone are employed instead of regular bait. Sometimes, instead of a hook, the natives merely jig a bear's tooth with two or three smaller teeth or pieces of bone dangling around it. The tom-cod are attracted by the white gleaming teeth and are speared with the double gaff. The rod is usually a straight piece of wood notched at each end so that it resembles a very long netting needle. Similar rods are sometimes used in lake fishing, but there the preference is for a curved handle."

"Generally, the objective point with those who move inland early is a fishing lake that is also frequented by caribou and while the men hunt the women fish with hooks. As the hooks are not barbed they are seldom 'set.' Later, when the water courses become free of ice, fish are often speared at certain well-known spearing places. These spears are of the three-pronged Eskimo type with handles sometimes twenty feet long or longer. The barbs of these are usually of copper, though they may be of iron, bone, or antler.. ...Perhaps the most frequented spearing place is at Bloody Fall on the Coppermine. No fish nets or fish traps are used or known."

2: Stefansson--84 (1908-1912) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 226, 411

"There are two methods of catching fish, by hook and by spear. The hooks are generally of copper, unbarbed. The spear is of the ordinary Eskimo three-pronged type the barbs of the two side prongs being of copper, typically, and the prongs themselves of musk-ox horn or caribou antler. These spears are often mounted on handles over twenty feet long. A combination of the hook and spear is found in hooks mounted on spear handles. The difference in use between these and spears is merely that in spearing the fish is transfixed by a thrust, in hooking it is transfixed by a jerk towards the fisherman. The simple hooks are generally used without bait. In using the spear or pole-hook the fisherman holds the shaft in one hand, while with the other he dangles in the water near the spear or hook, a bait attached to a long string. This bait is usually the canine tooth of a wolf or bear."

2: Stefansson--244 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
226, 117

"Fishing. They use ice picks for fishing when first they move inland. The fishing is chiefly by spear, a polar bear tooth is 'jigged' on a string and the fish speared when they approach."

8: Cadzow--10 (1919) 1920 Copper Eskimo
226, 227

[AW: For Cadzow's description of the manufacture of a gaff-hook and accompanying illustration, see categories 325 and 391.]

8: Cadzow--10-11 (1919) 1920 Copper Eskimo
116, 226

"The gaff-hook is used generally for catching the so-called trout in the streams flowing into the Arctic. These fish, which in reality are a species of salmon, weighing from three to ten pounds, enter fresh water only during the spawning season. In using the gaff the fisherman finds a shallow place in a stream where the trout are running. Standing in a cleared space, usually a gravel bar, he cautiously slips the hook into the water, prongs upward, and allows the pole to float with the current until the hook is directly behind a fish, then with a quick jerk he transfixes it, and, running up the bank, drags it out of the water. With a forward thrust he loosens his catch, kills it with a club, and is ready for another. The fishermen of the tribe are usually accompanied by the women, who cut the fish in strips, dry them on low racks on the spot, and store them in caches for winter use. [11]

Length of head, 10 1/2 in.
Length of forward prong, 9 1/2 in.
Length of rear prong, 7 1/2 in."

11: Stefansson--203 (1908-1912) 1913 Copper Eskimo
116, 226

"Our archaeological investigations have shown us that the knowledge of fishing by nets never extended farther east along the north shore of the mainland than Cape Parry, and the Copper Eskimo have no method of catching fish except that of hooks and spears. The hooks are, like most of their weapons, made of native copper. They are unsuited for setting, for there is no barb, and unless the fish be pulled out of the water as soon as he takes the hook he is sure to get off again."

12: Collinson--171 (1851-53) 1889 Copper Eskimo
116, 361, 226

"On our route to the ship next morning we found the Huskis [T.M: a sailor's term for Eskimo] camped in snow houses on the banks of one of the lakes, where they were now employed fishing; having cut holes through the ice and attracted the fish by some glittering object, it was speared. Some they had procured thus were ten and twelve pounds weight, two of which we purchased for an awl and two needles, and found them to be salmon trout, and capital eating."

12: Collinson--220 (1851-53) 1889 Copper Eskimo
116, 226

"The natives had got some deer and a quantity of geese, some of which they could now afford to part with, and was bought accordingly. The latter had been caught while moulting. Finding also that they were in the habit of catching fish through holes in the ice, a party was established for that purpose on the lakes."

12: Collinson--284-285 (1851-53) 1889 Copper Eskimo

116, 226, 412, 146, 261

"Fish appeared to be the staple article of food, which both the sea and the lakes afforded in abundance; they are caught with copper hooks, or speared through holes in the ice, or from stone piers, built for that purpose. In the autumn the fine healthy colour of the men, women, and children showed they were well fed, [285] and contrasted strongly with our people; but in the spring I thought we had the advantage. Our biscuit was eaten as a curiosity, but neither it nor the salt meat relished; the preserved meat was, however, taken readily. A quantity of deers' excrement was collected, and is I believe had recourse to in times of scarcity as an article of food; but such did not seem to be the case this season, as we were never importuned for food; and my anxiety was relieved lest, in their desire to possess our knives, &c., they might have deprived themselves of sufficient subsistence till the spring. They may be considered as entirely a carnivorous race, and for the most part consuming their food raw. A favourite morsel is the yellow top-knot of the king drake, which they were usually permitted to bite off on paying us a visit. Water, although acceptable during the winter, is consumed sparingly. Tobacco and spirits they are so far fortunate as to be yet unacquainted with."

hardly distinguishable from the antler knife used by the women for chopping snow; but a curving prong in which the point formed nearly an acute angle with the handle made a more efficient tool (Figure 122).

Figure 122. Curved pick of antler. [illegible].D.1634. 1/4.

Mattocks were seldom required except for two purposes, to secure, in the autumn, mud for plastering the runners of the sleds, and to make shallow pits where the hunter could await unseen the approaching caribou. Some families had no mattocks, but no hunter's equipment was quite complete unless he carried a short straight one in his bow-case. In fact, the usual name for a mattock was *tallulit*, i.e., a tool for making a *tallu* or hunting pit.

Snow Sounder. The main purpose of the snow sounder was to test the depth and compactness of snow with a view to the construction of a snow-hut. Hunters used it occasionally to probe the breathing holes of seals.

The implement was a straight, slender rod of antler[1] roughly 3 feet long, usually shod at the bottom with a peg of bone or musk-ox horn. The handle, of bone or musk-ox horn also, nearly always took the form of a round button drilled to fit the top of the rod (Figure 123). Figure 124, however, shows a specimen with a more elaborate handle.

FISHING EQUIPMENT

Copper Eskimo methods of fishing have been described in Reports of the Canadian Arctic Expedition, 1913-18, vol. XII, pages 152-157.

Rods, Hooks, and Lines. There were two types of fishing rods. The first was a short stick from a foot to 18 inches long, curved at one end to form a handle, and notched at both ends to wind up the line. The Eskimo often had some difficulty in securing suitable wood for this kind of rod, wood that would bend without cracking. Hence, they frequently spliced two pieces of wood together, or a stick of wood to a handle of antler; or they even made the rod entirely of antler. With dry wood, too, the notches were very liable to break,

[1] [illegible] obtained a very unusual rod of solid copper (Anthrop. Papers, Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., vol. XIV, pt. 1, p. 39 (New York, 1916)).

with fine willow bark; many a careless fisherman, however, instead of splicing it, simply fastened it down by two or three half hitches. The same method of fastening the line was adopted when the sinker had only one hole.

The bottom of the sinker was nearly always grooved to fit the end of the hook; and often a small hole was drilled beside this groove to tie on the bait. The hook was originally of copper, but by 1914 most of the natives were using an iron hook beaten out in the same manner as the old copper one (Figure 128). Generally, it was flattened at the upper end and riveted, but occasionally it passed through a hole in the sinker and was pegged to its back (Figure 129). Iron hooks were often driven directly into the bottom of the sinker without riveting. There was never any barb, and the hook seemed extraordinarily large for the size of the fish; but it was never intended to be swallowed, as the fish was jagged in the mouth as soon as it nibbled at the bait.

The bait was usually a strip of skin and flesh from the belly of the fish, or sometimes its œsophagus. After being pushed onto the hook it was lashed to the sinker with a thread of sinew.

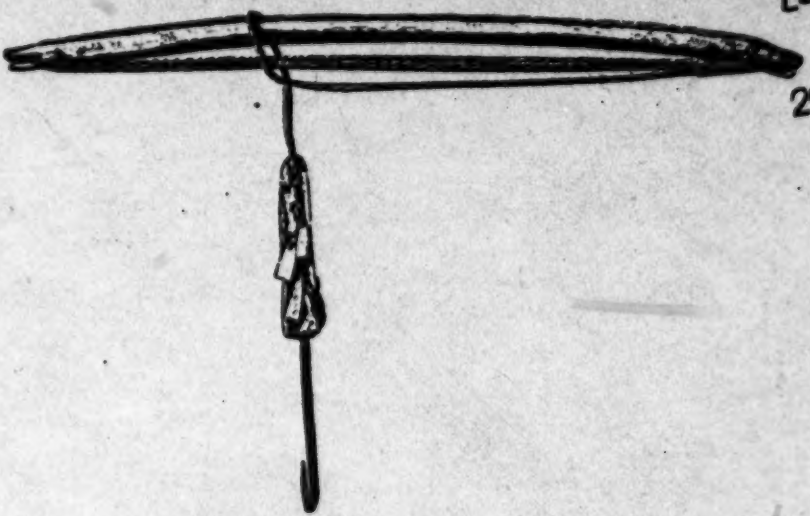

Figure 125. Wood fishing rod and line. IV.D.187. 1/4.

The sinker for cod was made from the same materials as the sinker used in lake fishing, but was generally much longer. The hook was also much longer, varying from 5 to 9 inches; but both it and the line were attached in the same manner. As no bait was used, there was no small hole at the bottom for its attachment; but three or four lures of bone or teeth, sometimes neatly shaped, were fastened at intervals to the under surface of the sinker by means of holes and sinew lashings (*See* Figure 125). Some common forms of these lures are shown in Figure 130. Often the natives dispensed with a hook altogether and used spears and a larger lure, made from a bear's tooth strung with smaller teeth or with gleaming fragments of bone that fluttered like fins in the water (Figure 131). Indeed, they caught more tomcod with their spears

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 110]

Indeed, they caught more tomcod with their spears during the winter months than with hooks. The Copper Eskimo never employed the artificial baits of stone or ivory, carved into the shape of fish, that were current among the Eskimo to the westward.

Figure 131. Lure of polar bear's tooth. IV.D.706. 1/2.

Gorges. Women, rarely men, caught a few trout and salmon with the gorge, which was merely a pointed bone wrapped inside the body of any small fish and attached by a line to the shore. Figure 132 is copied from a rough field sketch of a gorge used by a woman on Victoria Island. It was about 6 inches long, made from a splinter of caribou leg bone, and not distinguishable in any way from the needle used for stringing the salmon that were caught in weirs. I never saw a double-pointed gorge.

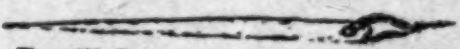

Figure 132. Bone gorge, for trout and salmon. 1/2.

Needles for Stringing Fish. Most needles used for stringing salmon at weirs were roughly shaped splinters of caribou leg bone (Figure 133), but in

28: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1946
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

226
227 *Fish Rakes.* The fish rake was employed at the foot of a few cascades where the salmon congregated in such numbers that no art was required for their capture.

227
284
321

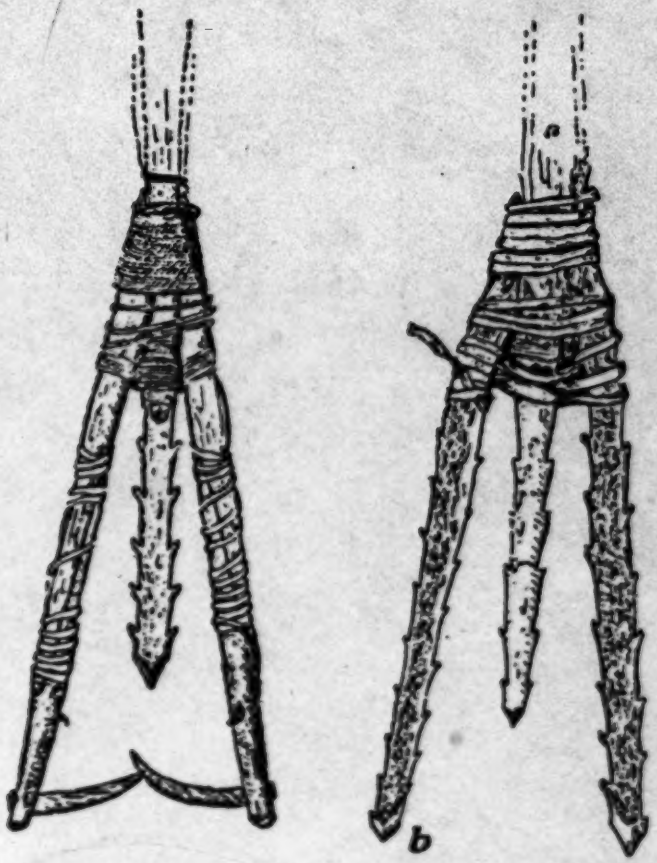

Figure 134. a, leister, IV.D.117; b, trident, IV.D.121. 1/2.

226
227 Hearne, the first traveller to observe it, described its use as follows:

"The salmon at Bloody Fall, on the Coppermine river, were so numerous that when a light pole armed with a few spikes, which was the instrument the old woman used, was put under water and hauled up with a jerk, it was scarcely possible to miss them. Some of my Indians tried the method, for curiosity, with the old woman's staff, and seldom got less than two at a jerk, sometimes three or four."[1]

[1] Hearne, op. cit., p. 103.

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

range. Chilled with the cold, we left our hiding-place and approached them from another direction. Ikpuck crawled near enough to shoot one of them in the leg; but his bullet inflicted only a flesh-wound, and the caribou with its mate galloped quickly out of sight.

Thus all day misfortune dogged our footsteps. We travelled perhaps thirty miles after our light breakfast at 7 A.M., and by nine o'clock in the evening I was almost exhausted. Then, as we wearily climbed the crest of a ridge, we came upon three fresh snow-blocks that our companions had placed in line to direct us to their new camp. Ikpuck passed them by with a brief glance; he refused to turn back empty-handed when caribou surrounded us on every side, and wished to continue the chase indefinitely, even though we slept on the uncovered snow. But I was less jealous of my reputation as a hunter, and with some difficulty persuaded him to accompany me to camp.

Our companions had pitched their tents beside the first lake within the Colville Hills, a lake that abounded in two kinds of fish, lake trout and lake salmon, although it was only half a mile in diameter. Men, women, and children, scattered over its surface, were industriously chiselling holes through the thick ice or jigging their lines in the water below. The caribou meat in their camp had lost its attraction; they wanted to dine on fresh fish, which no one had tasted for six months. In less than two hours they hauled seven

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

fine trout out of the lake, and but a short time afterward the children were scurrying from tent to tent with steaming messes of boiled fish.

I lay back among the caribou skins after supper, using my sleeping-bag for a cushion, and listened to Ikpuck's account of our day's adventures. A careless movement of my foot upset a tea-cup, emptying its contents onto one of our best robes. Icehouse sprang up indignantly. "You miserable wretch!" she exclaimed. "Do you think you are lying on sealskins? See what you have done. You have ruined our best robe." I cast an apologetic look at Ikpuck, who sat in the opposite corner. A faint smile flickered over his face, and his left eye gave a perceptible wink. Poor Ikpuck. Icehouse intercepted the wink, and, transferring her wrath, heatedly upbraided him for his indifference, while the old man silently hung his head. But her anger gave way to laughter as she helped me to scoop up the tea, and the incident became only a standing joke within our family circle.

We remained at the lake for several days, dividing our time between hunting and fishing. I was not familiar with their method of fishing and had better luck with the caribou. The Eskimos could stalk more skilfully, but my Ross rifle with its powerful copper-nosed bullets was more effective than Ikpuck's .44 Winchester, The Runner's .22, and the bows and arrows that made up the rest of our armament. So

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

224 411 123 they were always well pleased when I joined the hunting excursions.

221 224 226 Yet my "parents" were not satisfied. They wished me to become expert in fishing also. The caribou migration was almost ended; soon the herds would scatter far and wide, and fish alone be our mainstay 237 123 until midsummer. Icehouse made a bag of sealskin to hold all the trout and salmon I would surely catch, and Ikpuck overhauled my fishing-line, fitting it with a barbless hook and bone sinker like his own. Then he wound it over a short stick notched at both ends, gathered up his own equipment, and invited me to my first lesson.

226 123 [325] I have a vivid recollection of that lesson. We went out on the lake before noon, and with a chisel of native copper lashed to the end of a stout pole Ikpuck proceeded to dig a hole through the six-foot covering of ice. In twenty minutes he reached the water, making a hole fifteen inches in diameter at the top, four inches at the bottom. He then lowered his line until it touched bottom, rewound it about a foot, and began a rhythmical jigging.

"Take my chisel and make another hole for yourself," he said. Nothing seemed easier. I moved about twenty paces away and dug steadily for half an hour, but always there was more ice at the bottom of the hole. Ikpuck, who already had two trout on the ice beside him, looked over and laughed. "Come and

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

fish here," he called. "I will finish the hole for you." 226
We changed places, and I dropped my line into the 123
water. Presently I hooked a fish, which I hauled up eagerly, hand over hand, as I had often done in boyhood; but it slipped off during a momentary pause in the strain, for the hook was barbless. Afterward Ikpuck taught me his own method of pulling in the line, and the reason for the barbless hook. He used, not his hands, but his wrists, rotating them alternately against the cord so that the strain remained constant. A barb was not only unnecessary, but a disadvantage, because, in jigging, a fish is caught in the lip where the flesh is tender, and a barbed hook often tears loose where a barbless hook holds firm.

For an hour we had no more bites, so we crossed some ridges and dug new holes in another lake, two miles away. Here the light breeze of the morning sud- [132]
denly increased to a violent gale. Ikpuck, considering it part of the day's routine, sat on a snow-block with his back to the driving snow and jigged his line as patiently as in calm summer weather. I perforce did likewise, though my feet seemed to grow colder and more solid than the ice beneath. We returned to camp at last with five trout and two salmon, one from my hook, all the rest from Ikpuck's. But the lesson he gave me bore fruit, for within a month I could dig my own holes and catch as many fish as my companions.

Two short moves from this lake brought us to the 133
221

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

226
291
133

Ilpuck sat on a snow-block with his back to the driving snow.

[P 128-A]

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

226 •
291
133

Whenever a shoal gathered in the upper chamber they blocked its entrance and stabbed the struggling fish with three-pointed spears.

[p. 128-G]

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

Our party split up each morning and drifted in different directions, each person carrying a fishing outfit, and the men their hunting weapons. Nine or ten hours later the women straggled back with their fish, bearing also, in fine weather, loads of dryads to cook the evening meal. They cut off the heads of the fish for the cooking-pots, threw the backbones and fins to the dogs, and spread the bodies on boulders, or across horizontal poles to dry in the sun. The whole party then reassembled an hour or two before midnight, and, squatting outside the tents, gnawed the fish-heads, bone by bone, and discussed the day's adventures. The hungry dogs looked on with mournful eyes; tied to stones, they dined miserably on bones and broth.

I hunted, most of this period, to obtain caribou meat for my starving dog-team, but during a fortnight's steady tramping saw but two young bulls, which we consumed entirely in three days. The stony ridges cut to pieces my light sealskin boots, intended only for soft snow, and Icehouse, who had tried to patch them each evening, finally rebelled. "Stop hunting for a time," she said. "Your boots are wrecked beyond repair, and caribou will be scarce until the warmer weather comes and the mosquitoes drive them near our camps. Stop hunting, and I will make you new boots with stouter soles for the summer months."

It was not only my boots that troubled her. She believed that an evil demon, haunting the hills to the

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

776 westward where I generally made my excursions,
123 trapped and destroyed the solitary hunter. In this very district, many years before, it had spirited away her first husband, who had vanished without leaving a trace. So when I, too, vanished for sixteen hours one day she became greatly alarmed, and entreated Ikpuck to lead a searching party. Willy-nilly, I had to join the fishermen and let my dogs go hungry.

• 226 The fish soon commenced to bite less freely in the surrounding lakes, and some of the men wandered far-
224 ther afield. Ikpuck then shot a caribou eight miles
361 away near the shore of Lake Ever-Frozen. Instead
484 of packing it home, he buried it in the snow and advised
[492] moving our camp to its vicinity. Every one welcomed his suggestion and prepared back-packs for the dogs, since the melting of the snow on the ridges rendered
[251] our sleds useless until autumn came round again. We concealed in stone cairns the dried fish we had accumulated, raised the empty sleds on stone pillars, and piled on top of them all the stone lamps and other articles too heavy or too bulky to carry around with us during the summer; then, packing on our backs the remainder of the equipment, we abandoned the Lake of Dancing and marched away to our new home.

484 It was a picturesque sight, this train of people and
482 dogs staggering over hill and lake under burdens almost equal in size and weight to themselves. The men carried the tents and weapons, the women the

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

223 291 place. Despite Icehouse's loud remonstrances, despite the laughter of the rest of us, he raced for the pool again, the long tail alternately flapping between his naked legs and streaming in the air behind him. And again the ice gave way beneath him! Chilled to the bone, and thoroughly crestfallen, he hastened to the shore, and in a surly voice bade Icehouse unfasten the packs and set up the tent.

221 361 • 226 Our jigging in this corner of Lake Ever-Frozen was very productive for a week, and the new camp with its lines of drying fish among the dogs and tents soon became a replica of the one we had just abandoned. To stand on the ice hour after hour and mechanically vibrate a long line in the clear water below was a pleasantly monotonous occupation when the air was mild and the sunlight sparkled in the crystalline snow. [132] Even when fogs rolled down on us, and only the dark water-holes at our feet relieved the whiteness all around, there was a comfortable peace in the atmosphere and in the mellowed voices that penetrated from 224 somewhere unseen. The life was in fact too tranquil, too monotonous, for The Runner and his wife. They craved more activity, and spoke of hunting for caribou [123] to the northward; and when they broached their project to me I rashly promised to accompany them.

We set out on a clear, bright morning and travelled from one ridge to another, pausing on each crest to search the surrounding country. No caribou were

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

224
[251] of which we shot. The heads and limbs we buried
[482] in the snow to collect the following day; The Runner took one of the carcasses on his back, I took the other,
[593] and Leaf carried the two hares. After we had proceeded thus for about a mile The Runner changed burdens with his wife, who accepted without a mur-
[123] mur. I promptly changed with him, and a few minutes after with Leaf again, giving her back the hares. But packing was still a new experience to me, and though I reached the camp without mishap, I deeply rued my gallantry the next morning when a thousand pains shot through my neck every time I turned my head.

221 A fortnight's fishing exhausted the bay and com-
226 pelled us to make another move. It mattered little
361 which way we turned, for every ridge bounded a lake that contained both trout and salmon. But since the total catch would be greater if we scattered our forces and settled on different lakes the families separated. The Listener went south, The Chatterboxnorth, Parted-Hair north-east, and Ikpuck and The Runner east.

221 This dispersal of the individual families completed
361 one half of the strange cycle through which the Eskimos passed year after year. They reacted to the seasons, to their constantly changing environment, more than most of the inhabitants of our globe. The problem of obtaining life's basic needs, food, clothing, and shelter, left little time for other thoughts; and the seals and caribou that furnished them with food, fur-

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

789 shades of white men; I named them for her, Jack,
921 Bob, Mary, Jane, and soothed them with fair words until they departed. Others, that were the shades of Eskimos, she herself propitiated in like manner, and banished with her knife a few that seemed loth to depart. At last her efforts succeeded; the jacket told her that the atmosphere would clear on the morrow, and, greatly relieved, she retired to her sleeping-bag to await the result.

An east wind sprang up in the morning and the fog lifted. "Look," she cried, issuing from the tent. "Yesterday we assailed the fog and it has vanished." Ikpuck and his party appeared about noon, weary, but
484 otherwise none the worse for their experience. Think-
[513] ing it useless to search for the camp until the weather
[226] cleared they had wandered about, fishing in different lakes, and huddling together at night on patches of
[224] bare ground. Ikpuck had shot a bull caribou that strayed
[262] near them, and they had satisfied their hunger with the
[263] marrow and back fat, seasoning them with raw fish.

The Runner now decided to move to a lake farther
221 north where they had caught many fish during their
361 late excursion; but Ikpuck wanted to continue eastward in search of more caribou. The former departed first. We watched his family disappear over the ridge, then packed up our own equipment and marched away. So our last link with the tribe was severed, and the dispersal of the band complete.

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

BREAD FROM THE WATERS

A T-shaped lake larger than most of the lakes in the vicinity was the site of our next camp. We deposited our packs on its shore and went out on the ice to fish.

Ikpuck and I dug holes, but Icehouse wandered over to a sun-lit pool at one corner and dropped in her line. It hooked a trout even before it touched bottom, and in the space of four hours she drew from this one spot twenty-nine trout and two salmon, although Ikpuck and I, who dug holes not a hundred yards behind her, caught only ten trout between us. It may have been the sunlight alone that attracted the fish; more probably the stream that rushed down the neighbouring slope washed many insects into the pool and made it an unusually rich feeding-ground.

My family thoroughly enjoyed the solitude and freedom of our new camping-place, where we could come and go, eat and sleep, as fancy moved us. The children, Jennie and Knife-Blade, counted this period a holiday, and when fishing grew monotonous, stripped off their clothes and splashed in the water, or snared the longspurs and sandpipers, or shot at ptarmigan with their bows and arrows. Sometimes they vanished for several hours, and returned in the early morning, while we were sleeping, merely to eat and rest before their next excursion. Their parents imposed no restraints on them and exacted no duties. Whenever they were absent, and Icehouse wanted to cook, Ikpuck, forgetting the pride of a hunter, would fill

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

of us with a morsel of dried trout. It may seem strange that such close kinsmen should insist on a formal display of hospitality and goodwill, but Eskimos, like all human beings, are slaves to customs of their own creation.

The increasing number of cracks in the ice, and of deep pools round the margins of the lakes, induced Ikpuck and Parted-Hair to adopt another mode of fishing. In place of the hook and sinker on their lines they attached the gleaming tooth of a polar bear, and whenever a fish approached this lure promptly transfixed it with a long-handled trident fitted with three bone barbs. They even waded out into the water and chased the fish back and forth until the survivors escaped under the ice. The latter method was so successful that they often speared in twenty minutes twice as many fish as the rest of us caught in a day; but it required amazing endurance, for their blood almost coagulated at times and their limbs became stiff and black. One could readily account for Ikpuck's rheumatism, though he himself would not have understood the explanation. I noticed that nearly half their catch consisted of salmon-trout, weighing, on an average, only three or four pounds, whereas the salmon-trout that migrate from the sea each year to spawn in lakes nearer to the coast average between eight and ten pounds. Evidently their growth is stunted by permanent imprisonment in fresh water. They

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

become, too, more sluggish, for though the lake trout will take the hook at any season of the year, we caught no salmon-trout until the ice began to melt and lanes of open water encircled all the lakes.

Several red-throated loons and Pacific eiders nested in our vicinity. The loons always build on swampy islets or on tiny peninsulas nearly severed from the shore. Each female lays two eggs, but the nests are so close to the water-line that one and even both eggs often become chilled and fail to hatch. Of the young that do hatch some are devoured by hawks, others by lake trout, which are almost as voracious as the pike of more southern waters. Nevertheless the bird is common in every part of the Arctic, so that its longevity must compensate for the low fecundity and heavy death-rate. The eiders build on dry land either near the margins of the lakes or on the hill-sides immediately above; and in their nests we invariably found from four to seven eggs. If every egg hatched, and the offspring continued to breed at the same rate, the population would treble itself within ten years, even discounting the short span of life of the individual bird and the destruction of the young by hawks and lake trout. But other agencies operate to check its increase, not the least active being the white foxes, which prey the more heavily on eider eggs because they are easily discovered and readily accessible. Thus by lowering the fecundity of the loons, and increasing

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

limited to about a quarter of a mile, unless the wind carried them farther. The animals suffered almost as much as ourselves. Our dogs tried to burrow in the ground to protect their feet and noses, and a young bull caribou, blinded by the cloud of mosquitoes that swarmed around its head, trotted within fifty yards of me without noticing my presence.

The warm weather, too, enlarged the lanes of water round the margins of the lakes and increased the difficulty of crossing onto the ice. Ikpuck therefore decided to return to Lake Ever-Frozen, which, from its size, remained ice-bound all or most of the summer. We first packed the dried fish one stage ahead, then returned for the camping-gear, and, thus travelling, reached in four days the eastern end of the lake not far from our old camping-place. The other families in the band had gathered there already, reunited by the same problem of food supply that a few weeks earlier had caused their dispersal.

My two months of practical training should have rendered me a past master in the fishing technique of my companions, but at this lake they taught me a new device. The largest trout always lay deepest, but none of our lines would reach the bottom of the lake. Moreover a long line, if drawn up quickly hand over hand—or wrist over wrist, in true Eskimo fashion—invariably tangles. Ikpuck's method was to lower his line to the last inch, and, when a fish struck, to run back-

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

ward from the hole, slowing down to a walk as the end of the line approached the under surface of the ice. The fish, half drowned by its rapid ascent, had then no time to jerk itself free of the hook, although it might easily tear loose if it struck the edge of the fishing-hole. By slowing down to a walk, Ikpuck could govern its passage through the ice with more caution.

For the guidance of the uninitiated angler I should add two rules that the Eskimos have tested and found useful. Respect the craving of trout and salmon for water by turning the heads of your catch toward the pool; then others will surely gather to your hook and seek to join their brethren on the ice. Secondly, when you lower your line into the water again, do not forget to say, "Encore, encore, give me another."

The rules concerning diet I cannot recommend with the same confidence. The Eskimos, who knew no vegetables save the semi-digested moss in the stomachs of the caribou, ate only meat and fish, preferably boiled, for second choice dried or frozen, and raw when necessary. Here in the Colville Hills scarcity of fuel made boiled fish a luxury that we could enjoy only two or three times a week. Breakfast consisted always of a half-raw fish taken from a drying-pole and consumed usually in one's sleeping-bag; dinner did not exist, and supper was boiled fish on lucky days and the same as breakfast on unlucky. The digestions

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

solitary vigil, it certainly left no traces in her appearance or mode of greeting. Her people, unlike other Eskimo tribes, never voluntarily abandoned the aged and infirm to die of cold and starvation, but prolonged their closing years with loving care. Parents and children were united by tender bonds that neither time nor distance dissolved. I once witnessed the chance meeting of an old woman with her middle-aged son who had been living in a remote tribe for many years; the stalwart hunter knelt in the snow at her feet, and, as she raised her jacket, reverently touched with his lips the breast that had nourished him in childhood.

A little north of our camp, Bad Creek cut through an outcrop of dolomite, forming a narrow S-shaped cañon a quarter of a mile long and forty feet deep. The locality was very familiar to my companions. From a ledge just under the brow of the cliff we dropped our hooks into a deep pool, and in a few hours hauled out seven large trout. (Whether any trout remained in the pool all winter, or whether they ascended to a lake before the freeze-up, I do not know; above and below there was less than three feet of water in the stream, which would freeze to the bottom before Christmas.) A gravel beach at the outlet of the cañon contained numerous pebbles of iron pyrites, used by the natives for striking fire; and a neighbouring meadow was white with the seeds of the cotton-grass that supplied both tinder and wicks for the lamps. The

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

in the open water near shore. It was not difficult to shoot them, but to bring them to land was an extremely hazardous enterprise, since a thin sheet of ice covered the water for a distance of a hundred yards out from the shore. Any dead seals that remained afloat, buoyed up by thick layers of blubber, drifted gently against its outer edge. Ikpuck crawled cautiously toward them, testing the ice in front of him with his hunting-knife; then, attaching a long line to a carcass, he retreated a few yards and dragged it out of the water. This was the most perilous task of all, and more than once the ice creaked ominously under the strain; but salt-water ice is less brittle than fresh-water, and he escaped with nothing worse than two badly frozen wrists. Out of six seals that floated he landed three, which provided enough blubber to last us a month, even if we kept the lamp burning five or six hours a day. He did not mention the freezing of his wrists, and we did not discover their condition until they turned completely black.

A lake near our camp yielded him other trophies. True trout were lacking, but salmon-trout that had migrated up from the sea earlier in the summer now began to spawn along its margin. He could see the male fish, a brilliant red at this season, swimming around little piles of boulders where the inconspicuous females deposited their eggs. They fled when his chisel struck the ice above them, but the male, and even

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

226 the female, often returned, to be impaled on his long-handled fish-spear.

224 In the meantime I kept watch for the caribou which now showed signs of migrating. At first they came in small numbers every second or third day; but soon more frequently, until as many as fifteen or twenty passed daily near our camp. Ikpuck, giving up his sealing and fishing, joined me in the chase, and together we shot about forty animals, although we carried to camp only the hides and whatever meat we
257 needed for immediate consumption. Some of the carcasses we cached under heavy stones, others we dropped into shallow ponds where the covering of ice would protect them from the foxes. Those that we buried under stones froze within a few hours, for the cold weather was an admirable refrigerator; and those that we submerged in the icy water preserved equally well, because the ponds were free of bacteria and too shallow for fish. We planned to recover these carcasses, of course, before the water froze to the bottom, or the ice became so thick that we could not extricate them without much labour. I earmarked twelve for the station at Bernard Harbour, where there would be no fresh meat apart from the caribou that might be shot during this migration; all the rest went to my family, who for two months longer had to live on fish and caribou alone.

136 Caribou, like salmon-trout, have their breeding sea-

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

nourished Icehouse wriggled in her bag for several minutes before she tumbled, like an enormous chrysalis, head foremost onto the floor.

We occupied a real snow-hut at the Lake of Dancing, one that had been erected by our companions a week or more before. Here we dismantled our caches of dried meat and dried fish, and recovered my sled, the big spring tent, and all the other things we had deposited at this place in the early days of summer. Foxes, worming their way through sundry chinks and crevices in the stones, had destroyed all the sinew fishing-lines; fortunately we had plenty of cod-line that could take its place. More serious was the destruction of the white-bellied caribou hides from which Icehouse had intended to make some finely ornamented costumes for the winter dances; but I assuaged her grief by promising to purchase other hides for her when the tribes reassembled at the sealing-grounds. We sighted one of the marauding foxes near our camp, and lured it within range by squeaking like a young bird; but Ikpuck's bullet struck only the ground between its legs, and, though deluged with snow, it escaped without injury.

After fishing in various lakes for a few days with little success we overtook our companions at the source of a creek that flows into Dryad Harbour. They had abandoned all further hunting and fishing on the land under the pressure of colder weather and were return-

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

Musk-ox land and restore him without delay, whole in body and untouched in heart. "Men are so foolish with women," she added, noting his tolerant smile.

Four of us, then, The Runner, Girling, Patsy, and myself, piled our belongings upon a sled and turned our faces eastward. Close to Locker Point, we reached a village of the Coppermine River natives, where signs of starvation confronted us on every side. The women, sheltered behind low walls of snow, were fishing for tom-cod to replace the seals their husbands could not catch; the lamps burned low in many of the huts, or were extinguished from lack of oil; and the hungry children gathered round our tent to beg for food. During the two days we stayed in their village we invited as many as we could to share our meals; but when they uncovered our sled in the darkness, broke into a box of hard biscuits, and emptied twenty-five pounds of rice into their mittens, we brushed the snow of their settlement from our shoes and resumed the interrupted march.

Our next stopping-place was a small settlement near the mouth of Tree River, a hundred miles farther east. The inhabitants turned out as usual to greet us, and after the first salutations, an elderly man, who appeared to be the leader of the band, invited us to enter his hut. There his daughter, a young woman about twenty years of age, was skilfully flensing a freshly killed seal. Her greasy clothes, dishevelled hair, gory arms, and

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

857 end of each day's march insisted on performing all the duties that her mother would have undertaken in the [372] same circumstances. She gathered fuel for our camp-fire while Patsy and I put up the tent, and she superintended, as far as she knew how, the cooking of the [291] evening meal. Then she dried our marching boots [296] (for we changed to slippers each evening), and, before breakfast, patched any holes that the stones might have [224] cut in their soles the day before. She shot an eider [226] duck along the way with Patsy's rifle, and if we had needed fish would have contrived some means of catching them, where Patsy and I might have failed. Altogether, her education was remarkably adapted to the country in which she lived, even though the three R's were not included in the curriculum.

231 There now befell us an accident, of a kind that in an Arctic winter often leads to serious disaster, but in our circumstances caused only embarrassment. One of our two dogs, prowling with its pack beside a cliff, became wedged in a crevice, and in trying to extricate itself lacerated its foot on a sharp rock. I bandaged the wound with a strip of skin and lightened the animal's load, but it was so crippled that it could hardly keep pace with us. We could not abandon it, nor, if we remained with it, could we hope to reach our destination. To our great relief, however, we found two families of Eskimos camping at the mouth of a small creek, who promised to take charge

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

of the dog for a few days in return for a small butcher-knife.

Shoals of salmon (or, to speak more correctly, salmon-trout), numbering from ten to forty fish in each shoal, had migrated up this stream to spawn in a lake at its source; and a little later in the season young fry, two years old, would migrate from the lake to the sea. The natives captured them by a very simple and effective method. They had built three barriers of stones across the stream, leaving narrow openings in the two that lay nearest the sea and completely closing the highest; whenever a shoal gathered in the upper chamber they blocked its entrance and stabbed the struggling fish with long, three-pointed spears. Nearly a hundred salmon, each weighing from three to twelve pounds, lay spread out on flat boulders around the camp, or hung from horizontal poles; and as many more were cached away under piles of stones. The migration seemed now to have ended, and the two families planned to go inland in search of caribou as soon as they could store away the fish that were still undried.

A larger band of Eskimos who were camped behind Cape Krusenstern had built their weir, not at the mouth of a stream, but in a shallower spot three miles inland near its outlet from a lake. Four and even six shoals of salmon had been ascending each day during the peak of the migration, and a fish that once entered the trap rarely escaped. The shoals then gradually

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

diminished in number, and for two days none at all appeared. The natives, who had nothing to do except deposit their fish in caches as it dried, were lounging around their tents, enjoying the halcyon days of early summer—that week or fortnight, all too brief, when life seemed a glorious holiday. Food was abundant in their camp, and the air so warm that they could sleep in the open air, hardly molested as yet by the clouds of mosquitoes that would shortly darken the sky and attack every living creature, man and beast alike.

Humour is never lacking in an Eskimo community, especially during days of idleness. As the women were gossiping inside a tent, one of the men called out that a shoal had entered the weir. The gathering dispersed in an instant; for although theoretically food was shared in common, the family that gathered the largest store always fared better than the rest, and enjoyed greater prestige. The women, therefore, rushed for their spears and hurried down to the stream. But as they collected on the brink and eagerly scanned the empty water, loud guffaws from the men behind advised them of the hoax, and crestfallen, even amid their laughter, they slowly retreated to their tents again.

About six o'clock the next morning, while the camp still slept, I rose to light our breakfast fire. A woman appeared at the door of her tent, and after gazing tranquilly around, picked up her fish-spear and

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

sauntered down to the weir. As I watched her she shouted, and wading into the water, plied her spear frantically to right and left. Instantly the camp was in an uproar. First the men dashed out, some naked, some half dressed, and, racing headlong to the stream, plunged into the water after her; but all the women loitered in the rear. Then shrieks of laughter mingled with the loud shouts and angry ejaculations of the men; the weir was empty, and the women had taken their revenge.

There was an elderly medicine-man in this camp, one whom we had nicknamed Socrates on account of his snub nose and unusual ugliness. He was a good-natured fellow, but rather dull-witted, and of no great authority among his countrymen because his guardian spirits were credited with little power. He thought fit to hold a séance during our visit, and, from sheer malice, as I believe, directed his utterances against Patsy and myself. Amid much unintelligible nonsense, he alluded to Patsy as the boy whose legs were too long, and to myself as the man who was frightening away the fish by dipping an iron cup into the water, iron, as every one knew, being distasteful to the salmon. But, unfortunately for his credit, the largest shoal of the season unexpectedly entered the weir within two hours of his séance, and the Eskimos, who attributed it to myself in some way, laughed at their seer, who perforce concealed his discomfiture under a foolish smile.

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

123 They then offered us several of their finest prizes and entreated us to stay a few days longer, probably hoping for a continuance of their good luck; but I could not linger. We distributed a few needles and matches among them, and departed while their expressions of goodwill still rang in our ears.

136 This renewal of the salmon migration occurred everywhere along the coast, reaching the two families [123] that were taking care of my dog. Apparently it was an unusual phenomenon, for they, too, ascribed it to my intervention. When I had left them they had shouted after me to "will" that more fish should enter their stream. More fish had come, several shoals of [231] them and they were deeply grateful. So they showered their gratitude on the dog, which was so gorged with fat salmon that it could hardly rise to its feet to welcome us.

• 226 The natives who had been camping close to the station had moved away when the first run of the salmon ended, and only Ikpuck and Icehouse remained in possession of their stream. My parents themselves were about to abandon it when the second run started and deluged them with its rapid succession of shoals, four and even five in one day. Husband and wife toiled incessantly for a week, cleaning and drying the fish and 261 storing them away under piles of stones. Never before had they gathered so abundant a supply against the early winter months, when the caribou disappeared to

EPILOGUE

Within ten years of our departure from Bernard Harbour one third of them had been swept away by influenza, and of the hundred Eskimos gathered around the radio station at Coppermine no fewer than twenty-six suffered from advanced tuberculosis.

Was this inevitable? Had we been more conscious of our responsibilities could we have spared them so rude an awakening, so painful an entry into what we call a civilized world? Or does fate spin her web remorselessly, blind to human hopes and weaknesses, indifferent to human suffering?

The children of Jennie's generation who escaped the new diseases underwent a social and economic revolution. Even as we sailed away traders entered their country seeking fox-furs, always fox-furs; and for those pelts so useless for real clothing they offered rifles, shot-guns, steel tools and other goods that promised to make life much easier. So the Eskimos abandoned their communal seal hunts and scattered in isolated families along the coasts in order to trap white foxes during the winter months when the fur of that animal reaches its prime. Their dispersal loosened the old communal ties that had held the families together. The men no longer labored for the entire group, but hunted and trapped each one for his family alone. Their diet and costume changed: more and more it became the diet and costume of the white man. For they had to purchase their winter's supply of food from the trading stores, since trapping

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

left them no time to hunt seals; and they had to buy clothing too from the same stores when the rifles that the traders supplied them exterminated the herds of caribou or drove them into districts far remote. So the new barter economy—furs in exchange for the goods of civilization—made life harder instead of easier, more complicated instead of more simple. The commercial world of the white man had caught the Eskimos in its mesh, destroyed their self-sufficiency and independence, and made them economically its slaves. Only in one respect did it benefit them: it lessened the danger of those unpredictable famines which had overtaken them every ten or fifteen years, bringing suffering and death to young and old without distinction.

Today the youth of the second generation faces another revolution. The atomic age is reaching out towards the Arctic. On this coast and on that stand radar outposts to scan the upper atmosphere, scientific stations to study it and to measure the sun's rays. Already a handful of Jennie's cousins and nephews have found employment at some of these stations: they have unloaded ships and planes, driven motor-boats and caterpillar-tractors, and shown a competence equal to the white man's in operating civilization's simpler machines. Only opportunity and training are lacking to equip them for larger roles. They are adapting themselves, too, to our money economy, and learning to work for a daily wage. But when we who created this money economy igno-